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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

April 7, 1994

BY HAND

Mr. William F. Caton
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: PP Docket No. ~~92-21~~ 93-21
Sports Migration Inquiry

Dear Mr. Caton:

Transmitted on behalf of The Texas Special Olympics are an original and nine copies of its Further Comments in the above-referenced proceeding. We would appreciate your assistance in distributing a personal copy of The Texas Special Olympics Further Comments to each Commissioner.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Wancho".

Tom Wancho
Director of Public Awareness
and Communication

Enclosures

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Before The
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554

In the Matter of

Implementation of Section 26 of the
Cable Television Consumer Protection
and Competition Act of 1992Inquiry into Sports Programming
Migration

PP Docket No. 93-21

FURTHER COMMENTS OF TEXAS SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The Texas Special Olympics ("TSO") submits these comments in response to the Commission's Further Notice of Inquiry ("Further Notice") in this proceeding. Although the Further Notice focuses primarily on professional and high-profile collegiate sports events, it also solicits comment about "any other sports (e.g. the Olympics) or other relevant topics." Further Notice at ¶17. TSO submitted comments last year in response to the Commission's initial Notice of Inquiry -- and submits these further comments -- in the hope that the Commission in its report to Congress will not ignore the substantial benefits received by TSO and similar organizations as a result of regional cable coverage of special sports events for which broadcast coverage generally is not available.

Since 1989, TSO has been the grateful recipient of unprecedented television coverage provided by Home Sports Entertainment ("HSE"), a regional cable sports network. Each year, HSE has produced and aired a two hour special program covering TSO's Summer Games. HSE repeats the show four or five times each year, including an annual showing every Christmas. In addition to track and field events, HSE also has featured gymnastics, equestrian, power lifting, cycling, golf and other special events. In doing so, HSE has provided tremendous exposure for the Special Olympics, not only in Texas, but also in surrounding states including Oklahoma, New Mexico, Louisiana and Arkansas. Like TSO, the Special Olympics organizations in those states have benefitted substantially from the coverage provided by HSE.

Although the Special Olympics occasionally have been the subject of short news stories and documentaries on broadcast television, HSE consistently has provided a sports showcase for TSO. HSE's sports announcers cover the TSO events. The TSO events are surrounded in the HSE program schedule by major league baseball, professional basketball or other popular sports events, bringing the TSO events to an entirely new audience -- sports fans. For an organization which strives to have its members recognized for their athletic achievements, the type of coverage provided by HSE is invaluable.

Many of the other benefits resulting from the exposure provided by HSE are immeasurable. To the extent that the HSE coverage allows television viewers to see the Special Olympians as athletes, it can significantly affect the public perception of mental retardation. HSE cameras have captured Special Olympians working at their full-time jobs and training for their events, just like the athletes featured in broadcast network coverage of the Olympic Games. Thus, HSE's coverage enables viewers to see the Special Olympians as hard-working individuals contributing to society in ways that many viewers probably never thought possible. The public relations and educational value of such exposure is incalculable.

Likewise, we cannot measure the benefit to the individual participants which results from seeing themselves in competition on television. However, there is no doubt about the value of the HSE coverage in terms of providing motivation for the athletes to continue to improve their skills and a reward for their hard work. For example, Johnny Kilpatrick, a Special Olympics golfer from Killeen, Texas, has endlessly replayed the three minute segment which HSE produced on him and his sport for the 1993 TSO telecast.

Other benefits provided by the HSE coverage of TSO events are more tangible. In addition to "improving our recruitment of corporate sponsors for the Games" (see Comments at 2), our relationship with HSE has led to other affiliations which

have benefitted TSO. For example, during the last year, HSE has helped TSO to establish an affiliation with the Southwest Conference pursuant to which the Conference provides tickets to selected Conference basketball games for use by Special Olympians and their coaches.

In short, TSO has benefitted greatly from HSE's coverage of special sports events for which broadcast television coverage generally is not available. We respectfully request that the Commission acknowledge in its report to Congress the significant contributions which regional sports networks like HSE have made to TSO and other similar organizations.

April 11, 1994

Respectfully submitted,

TEXAS SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By Tom Wancho
Tom Wancho
Director of Public Awareness
and Communication
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